A

COMPANION

FOR

PRAYER:

OR,

Directions for Improvement in Grace and Practical Godliness in times of extraordinary Danger.

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by *Rich. Alleine*, Author of *Vindiciæ Pietatis*.

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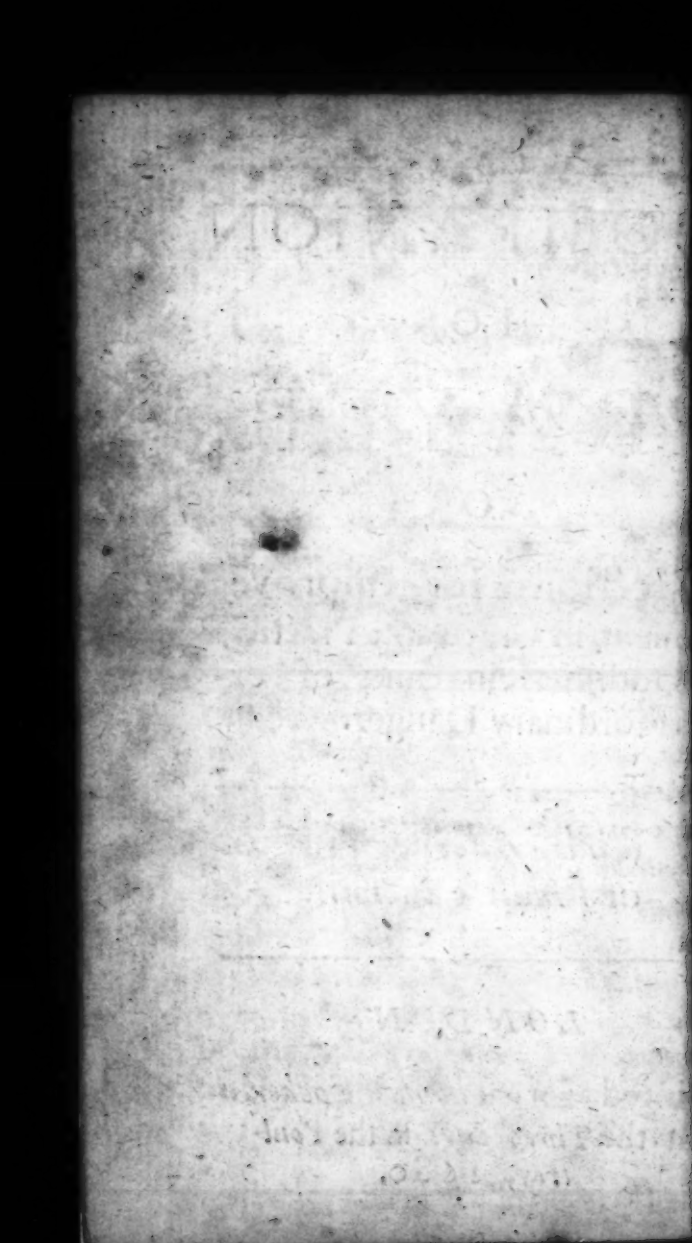

Reverend Sir,

THE motion made in yours concerning Prayer, hath much affected me, and hath occasioned some workings of my thoughts, which though (in a conscience of mine own weakness I more than once laid aside, yet they still return'd upon me; and I do now here offer the result of them to your Consideration.

We all know and teach, that they are only returning and reforming Prayers that will prevail with God; and 'tis to be doubted, that in this dead and decayed age there are too many professors who will joyn in the design of Prayer, whom this must serve instead of Reformation; 'tis to such especially that the Directions in the incloſed Paper are intended. I send them to you, desiring you to read them, and then to do what you please

with them; beseeching you, and tru
ing upon your friendly faithfulne
herein, that you will take your f
freedom, either to keep them in silen
to your self, or else to communica
and make them publick. I should than
fully accept of any expungings, alter
tions or additions that you shall thi
needful. The Lord pardon the failing
and accept the sincere aims of my so
herein. To his Grace I commend yo
and in him I rest,

Dear Sir,

Your unworthy Friend

and Servant,

RICHARD ALLEINE

A COMPANION FOR PRAYER:

OR,

Directions for Improvement in Grace and Practical Godlineſs, &c.

TO make way for, and to preſs to the diligent obſerving the following Directions, let theſe things be premiſed.

1. That the Power of Religion is much fallen, at leaſt is at a ſtand, amongſt

amongſt multitudes of Profeſſors *England*. Sure this needs no proo when we have ſo many ſad ocul Demonſtrations hereof before us.

2. That for this, the Lord ha a controverſie with us at this da *Rev.* 2.4. Whatever controverſie t Lord hath with the *Belials* among us, whoſe horrible wickedneſs ha even ripened them for vengeanc his ſpecial quarrel ſeems to be wi his own people. We may gueſs gainſt whom the ſpecial anger is, b obſerving at whoſe faces chiefly h arrows are levelled. Againſt who do our enemies (the rod of his a ger) make a wide mouth, and dra forth the tongue, and lift up the fierceſt hands?

3. No Prayers will avail, n have the leaſt help in them, but th Prayers of ſuch, with whom th Lords controverſie is taken up an compoſed; thoſe with whom h hath a particular quarrel, are lik to be unhappy Mediators for other

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We chuſe the favourites of Princes to be our Interceſſors with them.

4. There can be no taking up Gods controverſie, unleſs the matter of it be removed by repentance and reformation, *Rev.* 2. 5. *Iſa.* 1. 15, 16, 18. *When ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of blood; waſh ye, make you clean,* &c. *Come now, and let us reaſon together.* Joſh. 7. 10. *Get thee up; wherefore lieſt thou thus upon thy face? Iſrael hath ſinned*--they have taken the accurſed thing; and *v.* 12. *I will not be with you any more, except the accurſed thing be deſtroyed from amongſt you.* Is there no accurſed thing amongſt, even the profeſſors of Religion? Behold! the wedg of gold, and the *Babyloniſh* garment, their pride and their covetouſneſs, hid in their hearts for a tent. Go ſearch out theſe, and every other accurſed thing within you, let them be deſtroyed if ye would have the Lord to be at peace.

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5. If there may be such a spirit of Prayer stir'd up amongst us, as may have its fruit unto Holiness, and real reformation of the evils of our ways; this would comfort us, and give us great hopes in the hardest cases.

6. Therefore, in all our crying to God for his help, in case of publick fears, dangers or distresses, our eye should be firstly upon, and we should wrestle with the Lord for the pardoning, purging, and sanctification of our own hearts and lives; wherein if we prevail not, we shall be as a rotten tooth, or a bone out of joynt, for any help there is in us, or in any thing we do; unless we can pray up a spirit of Holiness in our selves, a spirit of Love, and of Power, and of a sound mind, we are not like to do any thing to purpose, in praying down Mercy for the people; the Devil will give us leave to visit the Throne of Grace, so we will but carry

carry our hard and uncircumcised hearts with us; if we cannot get to be of the Lords holy Ones, though we make many Prayers, he will not hear; here the interest and the hopes of the people of God lye, in the shedding abroad of the sanctifying and quickning spirit upon them; for this therefore should we firstly pray.

7. 'Tis not praying alone that will do: to the bringing on our Reformation, there must be also a constant and sedulous use of all Gods other means, in our whole course of life.

8. Some of these means are presented in the following Directions.

1. *General Directions.*

Direct. 1. *Take up a deep and serious design of making an advance in serious Religion.* Sit not down by, take not up with what you have already attained, but resolve for

reaching forward, and following after, towards that which you have not attained; content not your selves to drive gently on, as your flesh will bear, but stir up your selves to follow hard after the Lord; and let this be the deliberate decree and intent of you hearts. Say to thine heart, How is it with me? Doth my soul prosper? Are my ways such as please the Lord? What is mine expectation and mine hope? What is the aim and business of my life? Is it that Christ may be magnified by me, and that I may be made partaker of his Holiness, and shew forth his Vertues in my generation? Can I say with the Apostle, *To me to live is Christ?* Ah wretch that I am! how deeply hath this self and this world gone shares with my Lord! O! how little of my time, my parts, my strength, yea and of my very heart also have been inclosed and consecrated as Holiness to the Lord! how much of me hath been

left

left out in common for the world? Well, but what meaneſt thou for the future? wilt thou henceforth change the purpoſe and intent of thine heat? Come man, wilt take up a deſign for, and henceforth determine, and ſet thine heart upon a more watchful, fruitful and heavenly life? If thou wilt not be brought to decree, and reſolve upon a better life, much leſs wilt thou be perſwaded actually to it. What's begun well, is half done; and an holy deſign deeply laid, is a good beginning.

Direct. 2. *Let Gods Calls to extraordinary prayer, and a ſenſe of the neceſſity of your recovery and reformation, to your prevailing in prayer, quicken you on in the vigorous purſuance of your holy deſign.* Now is a time, wherein you have your hearts at the advantage, having ſuch weighty arguments before you, and the opportunity of doing

doing two ſuch great things more, as the ſaving of your ſelves, and alſo of the people, both from iniquity and calamity.

Direct. 3. *Do all you do, in purſuance hereof, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus.* Be not diſcouraged at any proſpect of difficulty, truſt in him for his help. Encourage your hearts with the words of the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 4. 13. *I ſhall be able to do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me.*

Direct. 4. *Keep your eye and your heart much upon God and the other world*; Be able to ſay with the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 3. 20. *Our Converſation is in heaven*; that is, there the buſineſs of our life lies; and that not only above ſpiritual and heavenly things, but with God himſelf. Live at the fountain and ſpring-head; thence all your light, and [illegible] and holineſs, and ſtrength muſt flow

flow down. Be much in looking upwards; and beholding in a glass the glory of the Lord, you will be changed from glory to glory, into the same Image, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. Look much and often upon the things that are not seen, if ye would be delivered from the power and malign influence of the things that are seen; let your eye be upon the Sun, and you will see a dimness and darkness upon the earth; get you cloathed with the Sun, and you will get the Moon under you feet.

Direct. 5. *See that there be no allowed sin in your heart or practice,* Psal. 66. 18. *If I regard iniquity in mine heart, God will not hear my prayer,* nor help me. An allowed sin is as the dead flesh in the wound; whatever methods or medicines be taken, there will be no healing till the dead flesh be eaten off; you may profess, and pray, and hear all your life long, and yet will never

prof.

prosper whilest you are privy to any one indulged sin.

Direct. 6. *Be constant and instant in dayly, secret and family Prayer.* Let not extraordinary Prayer excuse your ordinary; and let not your neglect of ordinary Prayer unfit you for extraordinary: Let not your way to your Closet be untrod. He that holds his acquaintance in Heaven by being often with God, will be the most like to prevail with God in the most pressing and difficult cases; those that are much in Prayer, those are the men that use to be mighty in Prayer.

Direct. 7. *In all your praying, both ordinrry and extraordinary, let your eye be* (I say not chiefly, but) *firstly upon the case of your own Souls.* What improvement you obtain here will be of this double advantage; 1. There will be the more hope of your being

ing heard for the publick. 2. If
e Lord be not prevail'd with for
blick mercies and deliverances,
t you will be the better prepar'd
r ſufferings. If God ſhould ſhew
ercy as to the publick, ſhould ſcat-
r our clouds, and blow over our
orms, ſhould cauſe our light to
eak forth as the morning, and our
ghteouſneſs alſo as the noon-day;
t what would all this be to thee,
ho art unrighteous? What would
be to thee, if in all the Land of
oſhen there ſhould be light, and
ou in the midſt thereof ſhouldeſt
covered over with the darkneſs
Egypt? if there ſhould be dew
all the graſs of the field, and thy
eece only ſhould be dry? if thou
ouldeſt live to ſee thy people a ſa-
d people and an holy and fruitful
ation, and thou ſhould'ſt ſtand as a
ithered and dry Tree amongſt all
e flouriſhing Cedars? Get up
ine own heart into good proof,
whatever ſpiritual plenty thou

maist see in *Israel*, yet thou wilt n
eat thereof. Talk no more of thi
hopes of seeing good days, how l
tle would that be to thee, unl
thou get thee a better heart?

Direct. 8. *Let your Prayers* [illegible] *followed with a constant care of yo* [illegible] *wayes.* Let not your prayi
serve you instead of repenting a
reforming, but let it quicken you
your whole duty; let your entri
into your Closet be your ascendi
heavenwards; and let not your r
turns thence be the falling down
your Souls from Heaven to Eart
Let your duties and ways be all o
piece; live like praying Christian
Let not the spirituality of yo
mornings and evenings, countenan
or encourage you in your all-d
carnality. *Be in the fear of the Lo*
all the day long, Prov. 23. 17.

Direct. 9. *Whatever incomes y*
receive from God into your own Sou

e free in disperſing to others: I mean
n a way of holy diſcourſe and con-
erence. Diſperſing and communica-
ing is the beſt way to thriving, Pro.
11. 24. *There is that ſcattereth, and
et increaſeth; there is that withholdeth, and it tendeth to poverty.* 'Tis
rue with reſpect to ſpirituals as well
s to temporals. There are none
hat grow more rich towards God,
han thoſe, who by bringing forth
what they have received, labour to
make others rich alſo. Give the
holy fire within you a vent, and it
will burn the clearer. Keep not
your Religion to your ſelves; let
your full cup run over, let your lips
drop as the honey-comb, let your
mouth be a well of life, and your
ips feed many, *Prov.* 10, 11. Build
up one another in the moſt Holy
Faith; provoke one another to love
and to good works; let your Fami-
lies, your Wives and Children, your
Neighbours and Acquaintance, have
light from your Candle, and be

warmed by your Fire. Doubtle
its one ſpecial part of Gods quarr
with Chriſtians, That they are,
very many of them, of ſuch carn
and unſavoury converſes. Is it [*thy*
caſe? haſt thou this to charge upo
thy ſelf? O! amend, amend, an
ſee that thou continue not ſuch
barren Soul; as low as 'tis with the
in grace, think not to riſe high, un
leſs thou wilt make better uſe
what thou haſt.

2. *Particular Directions.*

Direct. 1. *Conſider what it is where to you have already attained, and b thankful; and thence be encourage to preſs on and hope for more.* Ha thou obtained Grace from the Lord and hath he cauſed his Grace t abound towards thee and in thee and haſt thou a witneſs within the that thou haſt not received th Grace of God in vain? But do thou ſtudy to walk worthy of tha

Grac

Grace wherein thou ſtandeſt? O rejoyce in the Lord, and let all within thee bleſs his Holy Name; and take what thou haſt thus received as an earneſt of more. Set thy foot upon the neck of every mortified luſt, take the more heart to thee to go on in the fight, and rejoyce in hope of a total and final victory. The Soldier, when one Wing of his Enemies Army is routed, or they do but give ground, and begin to fall, this raiſes his courage, and he falls more ſmartly on. Go thou and do likewiſe; and let thy beginning, much more thy growth in Grace, and thy experiences hereof, be the oiling of thy wheels, for thy more vigorous following on after yet a greater increaſe.

Direct. 2. *Conſider what your ſpecial corruptions, infirmities, wants, neglects, temptations, or your moſt ordinary falls are.* 1. What your ſpecial corruptions are, how far forth you

you have conquered them, and where you ſtick. In ſome profeſſors, Pride, in others Covetouſneſs, in others Senſuality, in others Slothfulneſs, in others Peeviſhneſs or Frowardneſs, or the like, may have gotten ſuch head in them, that theſe weeds overtop, and even choke up all their flowers. 2. What your ſpecial wants or weakneſſes are in point of Grace; what graces they are, whether Faith, or Love, or Peaceſulneſs, or Meekneſs, or Humility, or Patience, &c. wherein you are moſt deficient or weak. 3. What Duties they are, as either Prayer, Meditation, Communing with your own hearts, &c. which you are moſt apt to neglect, or find moſt difficult to go comfortably through. 4. What Temptations they are, by which you are moſt commonly aſſaulted or foiled. 5. What your moſt ordinary Falls are in point of practice. And here let Profeſſors of Religion be warned

to

to conſider, if they be not over-taken (beſides many others) by ſome of theſe three evils. 1. An over-eager and greedy following after the World: The zeal of ſome mens ſpirits after riches, hath eaten up all their zeal of God. O! into what poverty hath thy Soul fallen, whilſt thou haſt been ſo buſie in the world, and haſt felt the proſperities thereof come crouding in upon thee! Some rich Profeſſors may remember the days of old, and be troubled. This thought, When I was but a little one in this world, then was it better with me than now; this thought may be an Arrow in their hearts, and kill the joy, and let out the juice and ſweetneſs of their greateſt abundance. I remember the kindneſs of my youth, and the love of mine eſpouſals; but O where am I now! my very riſing hath given me the fall. 2. A liberty for carnal jollity, a jovial and vainly merry life,

life; such there are, who have left off to walk mournfully before the Lord of Hosts, and have given themselves to live merrily with the world; who have given over to weep with them that weep, and are fallen in to laugh with them that laugh; to jest and sport and be vain with the vain ones, yea and it may be to drink and to sit by it with those that drink. It's now grown too creditable to frequent drinking Houses: Tradesmen that are Professors, especially in Cities or great Towns, how ordinarily do they, upon pretence of dispatch of business, sit many hours over a dish of Coffee, or a cup of Ale, or a glass of Sack; and carry it so, that they can hardly be distinguished from the good Fellows of the world, but perhaps by this only, That they are not down-right drunken into Beasts. If there be a liberty of such Houses, and meetings in them some-

metimes neceſſary (as perhaps it y) yet let not this liberty be d as an occaſion to the fleſh. Gaudineſs or over-coſtlineſs in pparel, wherein ſome of them tter and ſhine amongſt the great- Gallants of the earth. Some ongſt profeſſors do not only ſhun t diſdain and deſpiſe the old ſelf- yal that was wont to be among riſtians in theſe and the like par- ulars. as if they were ſet at liber- by the Goſpel from the Laws of rift, as well as from the Law of ſes. To theſe three let me add e evil more: 4. A neglect of r Families; of the Inſtructing, echiſing, and due diſciplining m; the conſequents of which lect are very ſadly to be ſeen in ignorance, errors, rudeneſs and rderlineſs abounding amongſt ny of them: there are not a few o take ſome care of themſelves, leave the bridle on the necks of irs, and reap many heart-break-

ing crops in them, as the fruits of their own negligence. O let holy *Joshua*'s resolution be yours: *as for me and mine house, we will serve the Lord*, Josh. 24. 15.

Now diligently search and consider thy self in all these things; and when thou hast faithfully studied thy self and thy ways, and hast found what it is that thou art most peccant or wanting in, and most prejudiced and hindred by; then conclude, *here my great difficulty lyes*, and therefore here my great work lies, if ever I would prosper to get this or that corruption to be mortified, this or that grace strengthened, such and such temptations to be shunned or provided against, and such and such faults to be amended; now I have found what hinders me; and that which doth hinder will hinder, till it be taken out of the way.

Direct.

Direct. 3. *Bend the main force of your Religion upon those very acts wherein you are most failing or guilty.* The Devil will allow us to busie in other matters of Religion, so he can but keep us off from those things where our great strefses lie: And the deceitful heart will rest up with that which is most easie and pleasant, that thereby it may better shift it self of that which is more hard, and would go to the quick with it. We never purge or bleed to purpose, till we hit upon the right humour, and strike the right vein.

This is to act rationally and in judgment; to bend our great strength there, where our great difficulty or weakness lies. When you have by searching found out what you mostly stick at, let it be your first grand errand in every prayer, whether ordinary or extraordinary, to beg special help in that particular case: your weakness

in any particular grace or duty, th
power of any particular luſt, co
ruption or temptation, your mo
ordinary and common falls in poi
of converſation; let theſe have
ſpecial place in every prayer yo
make: And alſo let them be mo
heedfully watched and laboured
againſt in your lives. Turn in t
ſtrength of prayer and watchfuln
upon the ſtrength of ſin; let yo
main batteries be againſt the ſtron
holds; and where your walls a
weakned, there ſet the ſtrong
guard and watch.

Direct. 4. *Meaſure your profi
ency in Religion, by the power y
get in thoſe particulars, wherein y
have been moſt deficient or fau*
Judge not your ſelves by th
things which are moſt eaſie in Re
gion, but by your coming off
your moſt difficult caſe.

Some profeſſors may at ti
eem to be full of good affectio
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rangely elevated and enlarged in
eir prayers, yea, and to live in so
eat peace, as to take themselves
have attained to the riches of full
urance, and yet for all this may
but very poor Christians all the
hile. Let them be asked, How
it with your Soul? O! I bless the
ord I find it very comfortable: I
ve sweet communion with God in
ayer, and I live in the sweet and
reshing light of his countenance;
washeth my steps with Butter,
d his Sun shineth upon my paths:
thank the Lord I go comfortably
n. But stay man, How is it with
ine old corruptions? Thou wer't
ce intollerably proud, or fro-
ard, or earthly, or a jolly and
inly merry soul; what ground
st thou gotten of those very cor-
uptions under which thou most
roanedst? How is it with thee with
espect to temptation? Dost thou
ar and fly from temptation, and
o what thou canst to keep thy self

out

out of harms way? and when thou fallest into temptation, when thou art actually tempted to Pride, Covetousness, when thou art provoked to passion or impatience, how goes it with thee then? how standest thou in the day of temptation? How is it with thee in regard of thy wonted evils in thy conversation? Hast thou sounded a retreat from thy eager chase after the great things of the world? Thou hast been a zealot for increasing thine earthly Substance, art thou now become more moderate? Thou wert once a slothful, lazy soul in the matters of God, art thou now more diligent and industrious? art thou fervent in spirit serving the Lord? Thou once livedst a jolly, frothy and merry life, dost thou now carry it with more seriousness? Hast thou left thy lying and deceitful dealing? Thou hast been a self-seeker, and a flesh-pleaser, but canst say, through the Grace of God, I have now be-

ken my self to a self-denying life; nd doest thou deny thy self in those ry things wherein thou wert us'd ast to seek thy self? Put thy self pon a close and severe trial here, nd know that if the strong hold e not battered and broken, if thine ld lusts do still hold their power in ee, if the old sore be still issuing ut, the old stream be still running s course; if thou canst not say, I ve kept me from [*mine*] iniquity, r at least am fighting more resolvedly against it; if thou still stickst where thou wert wont to stick; whatsoever flush thou seemest to ave of good affections, whatsoever onfidence thou hast of thy good ondition) 'tis a sure sign it is not so well with thee. Look to what degree of success thou hast attained in those things wherein thy great difficulty lay; to such a degree of soul-prosperity thou hast attained, and no more.

Direct.

Direct 5. *Measure your hopes of the answer of your Prayers for the publick, by your experience of their speeding in your own particular cases.* If thy sin can stand before all thy prayers, thine enemies, and fears, and dangers are not like to fall ever the sooner for such praying; what God may do upon the prayers of others, thou knowest not; but nothing is like to go the better for thee. If thou hast run with the foot-men (within thee) and these have been too hard for thee, how wilt thou contend with them that ride upon horses? If thou canst not stop the muddy streams of thine own cistern, how wilt thou stand before the swelling of *Jordan?* If thy prayers prevail so little to the setting thine own heart, or thine own house in order, how canst think they will do any thing against the hosts of the uncircumcised? *God heareth not sinners*; not only such sinners as are in a state of sin,

and

and totally alienated from the life of God, but even such also, who though for the main, they have been once washed in the blood of Christ, are again fallen into, and wallowing in the mud and mire of any one allowed sin; they are all like to be but miserable comforters in the day of distress. Remember that Scripture mentioned before, *Psal.* 66. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer.*

But on the other side, if thou dost obtain, if thou dost prevail in thine own personal case, this hath good hope in it. 'Tis an argument that thy prayers are accepted with God; and if the Lord accept thee when thou prayest for thy self, or for thine house, thence the greater hope will spring that he will accept thee when thou prayest for his own house and people. And if he doth accept thee for them, he will either deliver them out of their distress,

and thou ſhalt have the honour to be one of thoſe for whoſe ſake deliverance comes; or if he ſhould not grant thy requeſt as to the publick, yet he will not fail to give thee thine own ſoul for a prey, though he do not give thee the lives of them that ſail with thee in the Ship.

And now you ſee the beſt way that is open to you, to help at a pinch, to ſave the poor diſtreſſed Churches of God in this time of their need, ſuch praying as may have its fruit unto holineſs in your ſelves; by this you may do much to promote the holineſs and happineſs of the people; if any thing, this will do it.

Wherefore gird up your loyns, and ſet in in good earneſt upon this ſeaſonable and mighty duty. Go into your cloſets, lift up your hearts, draw forth your ſouls, pour out your tears, weep in your prayer, weep over you own and

the peoples sin and fears, and bow your selves with your might before the Lord; this once try what you can do, try the strength of prayer. Pray all to rights within you and at home, and then seek and cry, and wrestle, and trust, and wait for the Salvation of God to be revealed in due time upon his people.

Let us at length hear the conclusion of the whole matter, what shall be the fruit of all this: what will you now do? If I should only ask, Who among you will join in and pray, pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*, the Church of the living God? every one would readily answer, I will be for one, I for another, God forbid I should hold my peace, I will pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*, *Let them prosper that love thee: Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions sake, I will pray, Peace be within*

thee, because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.

If it be asked further, and who will pray for the destruction of *Babylon?* O, every one of us that have an heart for the peace of *Jerusalem.* Down with it, down with it even to the ground, Remember, O Lord, the Children of *Edom*, in the day of *Jerusalem*, who said, Raze it, raze it even to the very foundation. O Daughter of *Babylon* that art to be destroyed, happy let him be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

But would you that your prayers should be heard? Then arise out of your places, and fall every man upon a personal Reformation. Down with your sin, and out with the world; list up Christ in your own hearts, if you would have Antichrist fall in the earth; let Christ have a name within you above every

every name, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity, from his own iniquity; seek not for corn, and for wine, or for freedom to sit down every man under his own Vine, and under his own fig-tree, where none shall make them afraid; but seek the Lord, that the Lord God may dwell among you, may delight in you and be exalted by you, that you may indeed become the people of his Holiness, and the people of his Prayer; seek to be made partakers of his holiness, and follow after holiness, and so follow after that ye may obtain. Let there be such a heart in you, and such an holy design heartily taken up, and zealously pursued by you, and the Lord will certainly accept you and answer your prayers; and your profane enemies will then learn to take heed how they again mock or boast themselves against the prayers of the Saints. It was reported of a great

great Church-man, that when several Ministers were turn'd out of their places for non-conformity, he said in disdain, *Wee'l turn them out, and let them see if they can pray them in again.* Once lift up [holy] hands to the Lord, and God will give such Answer, that they will take heed of boasting again against prayer. And if yet they should take unto them the hardiness, to say where is your God? Doubt not but in a little time you shall have this song put into your mouths, *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us, this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoyce in his salvation.*

But if it must suffice you to pray and you will still go on to traverse your old ways, suffering your sins and the world to hold the head of you, let not such men think they shall receive any thing of the Lord.

Where-

Wherefore once again be exhorted to come to a point in this matter, and determine what ye will do; If yet will not heartily come in, in this neceſſary deſign of advancing in holineſs, you may even ſtand aſide, and ſit out from that of Prayer, for any good we can expect from you: But if you are reſolved on the former, and that with all imaginable ſerioufneſs, you will the more proſper in the latter; let both go together in one, and thenceforth look for good ſpeed in either.

Well, ſhall this Decree immediately go forth? Say the word once, but let it be with an unalterable reſolution; at leaſt, be adviſed to this (which I pray forget not) from the day of your next ſolemn appearing before God in this duty of Prayer for the publick, let your Decree be dated; and if need be, let the very day be written down, and ſo go, and let it be heedfully proſecuted; and upon each return of

of this solemn service, let it be actually and expressly renewed. *O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee.*

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